

more in length. As the patriarch gives voice to his roars the scent glands on the undersurface of the chin, are opened, and fine steamy jets of a powerful, musky-smelling fluid float off into the heavy miasmatic atmosphere of the bayou. The odour may be carried for miles and to the negroes it always signifies 'a big ol'gator'.

BOMBAY,

HUMAYUN ABDULALI

15th November, 1947.

[Hamilton in 'Wild Life in South Africa' p. 315, says that crocodiles 'when angry, hiss like most other reptiles. At other times they utter a fairly loud throaty noise'.—EDS.]

12.—NOTES ON A FEW REPTILES FROM THE NILGIRI HILLS

During a leave I collected a few reptiles in the Nilgiri Hills and some points of interest are here noted. The notes are written with reference to the account by Malcolm Smith in *Fauna of British India*, 2nd edition.

SAURIA

Cnemaspis gracilis Beddome.

1 ♀ in a cairn of stones, Kotagiri-Mettupalayam road milestone XI, 6-12-45, contained two eggs.

Cnemaspis jerdoni? Theobald.

1 juvenile, Elk Falls, body 18 mm., under log, 8-12-45. About the same time a number of gecko eggs were found below large boulders at Catherine Falls.

Calotes versicolor Daudin.

1 specimen, Kotagiri, the dorsal row of scales ran straight down onto the middorsal line of the tail.

Psammophilus dorsalis Gray.

6 specimens were collected on Windy Gap Hill, Kotagiri, 3♂♂, 3 juveniles. The general appearance was blackish. Top of head nearly black; back olive grey; 5 black ringed white spots on sides of largest ♂; from lips down side olive band changing sometimes to brick red; belly slightly golden; tail black and white bands. The colour was changeable quite markedly.

Rioha punctata Gmelin.

1 specimen caught with *C. gracilis*, 28 scale rows at midbody

SERPENTES

Plectrurus perottetti Dum. & Bib.

1 specimen Windy Gap Hill, Kotagiri, 5-12-45. V. 162, C. 7. Ground colour purplish brown, slight brick red spot at each corner of the mouth, brick red under tail, narrow brick red line on dorsal surface of tail.

Elaphe helena Daudin.

1 specimen, 14-12-45, near Kotagiri, V. 235, C. 91. Light olive ground colour, 9 black bands with white ocelli, expanding ventrolaterally, linked by black loops on belly, no longitudinal stripes on belly.

12 GIRDLER'S ROAD,
BROOK GREEN,
LONDON, W. 14.

GARTH UNDERWOOD

13. ACACIA THORN IN THE STOMACH OF A TOAD
(*BUFO MELANOSTICTUS* SCHNEID.)

Among a number of toads supplied for dissection in the class, a fully grown female toad (*Bufo melanostictus* Schneid.) measuring about 95 mm., distended with ripe eggs was found to have swallowed a biradiate Babul thorn (*Acacia arabica* Willd.) The two arms of the thorn were at right angles to each other within the stomach and measured 22 mm., and 20 mm. One of the pointed ends of the thorn rested freely against the middle region of the muscles overlying the parasphenoid in the buccal cavity and the other arm of the thorn had penetrated through the oesophagus right into the left urinary bladder. Due to this, the oesophagus had become greatly dilated so as to present little difference between the oesophagus and the stomach in size. The wound caused by the penetration of this thorn appeared to be completely healed up. On opening the stomach, I noticed bits of food such as cuticles and muscles of insects. This indicated that the toad was apparently without any discomfort and probably was leading a normal life. The swallowing of the thorn by the toad seems to be purely accidental.

I am indebted to my student Mr. Suresh Chandra Das for first drawing my attention to the above and to Dr. J. L. Bhaduri, D. Sc. (Edin.) of the Department of Zoology, University of Calcutta, for his valuable suggestions and criticisms.

MAHARAJA'S COLLEGE,
PARLAKIMEDI,
GANJAM, ORISSA.

BASANTA KUMAR BEHURA

18th November, 1947.